



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Local co-ordinated **in-year admissions** scheme for community and voluntary controlled primary and secondary schools in the Wokingham Borough **2023/2024**

This includes Local co-ordinated in-year admissions scheme for own admission authority schools where there is agreement to do so

INTRODUCTION

This is the proposed scheme for the local co-ordination of in-year admissions for the 2023/2024 academic year across the Wokingham Borough. Whilst there is no requirement in the School Admissions Code to co-ordinate in-year applications, a local co-ordinated scheme will be in operation for community and voluntary controlled schools for which the local authority is the admissions authority and for own admission authority (e.g., Academy or voluntary aided) schools where there is an agreement to do so.

Where own admission authority schools do not wish to be part of the Wokingham Borough Council co-ordinated scheme, a single preference common application will be produced for completion by parents for schools outside the scheme to enable parents to apply direct to the preferred school and those schools will be required to notify the School Admissions Team of both the application and its outcome, advising parents of their right of appeal against any refusal of a place.

Own admission authority schools may currently be consulting on any changes to their admission arrangements and all own admission authority schools will determine policies indicating whether they require applications direct to the school or as part of the coordinated scheme via the local authority.

IN-YEAR ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

This scheme applies to applications for Wokingham Borough schools included in the scheme. Parents who are moving to the Borough should provide documentary evidence of a move to the borough for example, exchange of contracts, signed rental agreement or posting order in the case of service families or an official letter notifying relocation date for Crown servants. It applies to the admission of a child to a relevant age group where it is submitted on or after the first day of the school year of admission or for the admission of a child to an age group other than a relevant age group.

For schools within the Wokingham Borough, a relevant age group means:

- children transferring from primary to secondary school into year 7
- children transferring from infant to junior school into year 3
- children starting school in foundation two (F2) Reception

The scheme does not apply to:

- admission to school sixth forms
- admission to nursery or foundation stage units into foundation one (F1)
- middle school or years 9 or 10 transfers

Responsibility for admission to school sixth forms or admission to nursery or foundation stage units for foundation one (F1) has been delegated to community and voluntary controlled schools, although a model policy will be provided by the council for community and voluntary controlled schools' use.

Applications for middle schools (with an entry age before 11) will be treated the same way as primary school transfer. Applications for upper schools (years 9 or 10 - with an entry age after 11) are to be treated the same way as the secondary transfer. Separate application forms will be made available.

TIMING OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be considered **half-a-term** in advance of the place being required. For entry to school at the start of term or half-term, an application will need to be received by the School Admissions Team, **15 school days in advance of the commencement date**. With the exception of Crown service, service families or look-after children

any applications received in advance of this will not be processed, and a new application will need to be submitted.

It is our intention that all applications should be processed, and the outcome of the application made within **15 school days** from receipt of the application. This is subject to

confirmation, if applying for an own admission authority school that a place can be offered, whichever is the latter. Allocation or refusal letters will be emailed where an email address has been supplied on the application form, or alternatively sent by second class post.

MAKING APPLICATIONS

Applications must be made using the Wokingham Borough application form to apply for schools within the borough. The common application form is available on request or can be downloaded at: www.wokingham.gov.uk/admissions. An online application facility is available for parents to apply via the council's website. An application form allowing a single preference will be available for own admission authority schools outside the scheme.

Parents may express up to **four** preferences for schools within the scheme, listing those preference in ranked order and giving their reasons for those preferences.

Where a place is available for a child at more than one school, Wokingham Borough Council will offer a place at whichever of these schools is their highest preference.

The School Admissions Team will pass on applications and any supporting information provided by the parent for any own admission authority schools **within the scheme** to their governing bodies so that they can make a decision about the application. The governing body should make decisions regarding applications within five school days of receipt. The governing body will then inform the School Admissions Team who will advise the offer or refusal on their behalf. There may be a delay during school holiday periods as the school may not be contactable.

In line with the School Admissions Code, own admission authority schools – academy and voluntary aided schools – may choose to admit pupils separately, but they **must**, on receipt of an in-year application, notify the local authority of both the application and its outcome, to allow the local authority to keep up to date figures on the availability of places in the area. If the admission authority chooses to admit a pupil separately, they **must** inform parents of a decision in writing within 15 school days of an application and also of their right to appeal against the refusal of a place.

Each preference will be considered against the admissions authority's oversubscription criteria if necessary and, where more than a single school place could be offered, the place will be offered for the highest ranked preference.

Where applications are refused, parents will be advised of their right of appeal. Where a place has been refused by Wokingham Borough Council or for schools, who are their own admissions authority within the Borough, reference must be made to the Council's website for details on how to appeal.

A place will be offered at an alternative school (the designated area school or most accessible school with places available) where the parent can provide evidence of their move to or

within the Wokingham borough, and parents will be advised of their right of appeal for their preferred school(s).

No offer of an alternative school place will be made where no change of address is made, unless requested to do so.

OUT OF BOROUGH APPLICATIONS

Wokingham Borough Council will not accept applications from other local authorities where their resident applies direct to them. Applications must be made direct to Wokingham Borough Council on its in-year application form. Where further information is required to support the application, liaison will take place direct with the parent. Wokingham Borough Council will respond to the parent, in writing, the outcome of their application. If the place is declined, the parent will be advised of their right of appeal.

Where parents are moving out of the borough; parents should apply direct to that local authority or to the individual school concerned depending on the arrangements in place in that area.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO SUPPORT APPLICATIONS

Where an applicant is proposing to move to the Borough, evidence will be required to support their application, for example signed rental agreement or exchange of contracts, families of service personnel or an official letter notifying relocation date for Crown servants, families applying from abroad or from areas of the country other than England. Evidence may also be required of the disposal of the previous property (particularly where the home address is within 20 miles of the borough).

Additional information will be required for applicants applying from abroad to verify right of abode (e.g., entry visa and passport details). It should be noted that a child moving from overseas with a right to live in the UK with parents may attend a maintained school. This does not apply where the stay is so short (e.g., less than six weeks) that it would not be practical for the child to attend school (e.g., holidays or short visits).

Supporting evidence will be required to meet some oversubscription criteria, please see the notes to each criterion for further information.

For own admission authority schools within the scheme, supplementary information forms (SIFs) may be required to support an application. SIFs are available for download at: www.wokingham.gov.uk/admissions or the school's website. Alternatively, the forms are available on request from the school. SIFs must be returned direct to the school concerned and the application made to Wokingham Borough Council. It is the responsibility of parents to determine whether a SIF is required to support an application and to complete and return in accordance with the published arrangements of that admissions authority.

To determine and support applications made under Fair Access Protocol; the current school may be requested to provide further information. Where requested, the school is asked to advise the School Admissions Team within three school days of the request for information.

RECEIPTS FOR/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS OF APPLICATIONS

An acknowledgement is automatically sent for applications made online and can be sent for those who apply via email.

Offers

On receipt of the application, consideration will be given to all school preferences and where potentially a place can be offered at more than one school preference, the single offer will be for the school ranked highest.

The offer of a place in a Wokingham borough school must normally be taken up within the declared half-term. Failure to take up the offer of a place during this time will mean that the offer is withdrawn, and the place released. Exceptions can only be made where the parent provides documentary evidence that the delay is unavoidable, through no fault of their own, or in the case, of Crown Service, service families or looked-after children.

In accordance with the School Admissions Code, admission will be deferred to the start of a term or half-term for the following categories of in-year admission:

- those that do not require a house move
- those where there is no reasonable need for an immediate move
- those allocated from waiting lists

It is envisaged that children normally would be admitted to school during a school term in the following circumstances only:

- a) those applying as a result of a house move i.e. unable to take up a place earlier due to living at a distance from the school
- b) those applying and unable to take up a place earlier due to ill health or other reasons beyond parents' control
- c) applications under the Fair Access Protocol

The benefit of moving the admission of children to the start of term or half-term is to minimise the disruption to their own and other children's education.

Places will be offered on the basis of the child's chronological age. Where a child is in a different year group and not already attending a Wokingham Borough maintained school, supporting documentation will be required from the child's current school giving reasons for this for consideration by an admissions panel. (See page 16 - Children working out of the

normal year group). Places can only be allocated to children working outside their normal year group with the consensus of the receiving school.

It is recommended that parents refer to the relevant admissions' authority's literature to understand how places are allocated and the process for handling their application prior to applying for a school place. For places in the Wokingham borough, a Parent's Guide will be issued on request and will also be available at: www.wokingham.gov.uk/admissions.

There is no guarantee that a place will be available at either a designated or a preferred school.

ACCEPTANCE OF SCHOOL PLACE

The offer letter will inform parents that they are required to accept or decline the place offered within 14 days from the date of the letter. Failure to accept the place offered will result in one further written reminder and failure to respond within the required timescale will result in the offer being withdrawn.

Any offer of a school place will be made to start during the current half-term or during the next half-term. Failure to start within this timescale will result in the offer of a school place being withdrawn.

The letter of offer will specifically request parents to advise the School Admissions Team if the place is not being accepted for any reason. If the child is living in the Wokingham borough and the parent is not accepting the offered place, they should advise what alternative arrangement has been made for the child.

AVAILABILITY OF SCHOOL PLACES

Parents may express a preference for up to **four** schools within the scheme and consideration will be given to each preference. It should be noted that where parents apply in-year, this means that places are being sought for year groups that have been allocated during the general transfer rounds:

- primary to secondary (moving from year 6 in a primary school to year 7 in a secondary school);
- infant to junior (moving from year 2 of an infant school to year 3 of a junior school) and
- Starting school into Foundation 2 (F2) Reception.

Each of these transfer groups have their own admissions schemes, with deadlines for the receipt of applications and a date on which offers of places will be made. Details of these transfer groups are available at: www.wokingham.gov.uk/admissions.

Wokingham Borough schools are popular so it is likely that a preferred school may be full. It is recommended that parents express more than one preference to maximise the extent to which preferences can be met.

Places cannot be held open for those applicants moving to a school's designated area and there is no guarantee that a place will be available at preferred schools.

It is advisable to contact the School Admissions Team prior to any house move to determine where there are school places and to verify the new home address' designated area if this is important to you. It should be noted that the information given is only current on the date you contact us and is subject to change as applications are received daily and places are allocated from waiting lists. Designated areas may change through the annual consultation and determination of admission arrangements.

As the local authority must, on request, provide information to a parent about the places still available in all schools within its area; all schools within the Wokingham borough are required to advise the School Admissions Team when places become available and the numbers on roll monthly.

Confirmation of school designated areas for each address in the Wokingham borough is given at: www.wokingham.gov.uk by visiting the 'find my nearest' section from the front page, keying in your address and scrolling down to the 'education and youth' section.

ADMISSION NUMBERS

Each school has a published admission number for each year group, which limits the places that can be offered, and all admissions are subject to places being available.

The limits are set on admission numbers, taking into account the school's net capacity and/or suitability of accommodation, and are designed to ensure that children receive an 'efficient and effective' education.

We are unable to allocate over a school's admissions number as too many children being admitted to a particular school could lead to overcrowding or pressure on facilities and other resources. The only exception is made where places are allocated under the Fair Access Protocol. The Fair Access Protocol is agreed with schools locally and any changes will be consulted on with schools within the Borough separately.

Details are available at: www.wokingham.gov.uk/admissions or copies of the protocols may be obtained on request to the School Admissions Team.

At Key Stage 1 (F2, Year 1 and Year 2), legal limits have been imposed on the size of infant class sizes, for these children the maximum class size is 30 to one qualified teacher. The Fair Access Protocol cannot apply in this instance except for the operation of waiting lists.

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA (CATEGORIES FOR ADMISSION) FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Children with statements of special educational needs or an Education, Health & Care Plan that name a school in the statement or plan are required to be admitted to the school that is named. The governing body does not have the right to refuse admission.

Reference should be made to own admission school admission policies to understand the basis on which an application would be considered – these will be available on the school websites or at www.wokingham.gov.uk/admissions.

The following oversubscription criteria in order of priority will be applied when a **community** or **voluntary controlled** school receives more preferences than places available. All preferences will be treated on an equal basis.

A. Looked after and previously looked after children are considered to be;

- Children who are in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by a local authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989, e.g., fostered or living in a children's home, at the time an application for a school is made; and
- Children who have previously been in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by a local authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 and who have left that care through adoption, a child arrangements order (in accordance with Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 and as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014) or special guardianship order (in accordance with Section 14A of the Children Act 1989).
- Children who appear (to the local authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A child will be regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society. The parent/carer will need to provide evidence to demonstrate that the child was in state care outside of England and left that care as a result of being adopted

Places will be allocated under this criterion when places are first offered at a school and the local authority may also ask schools to admit over their published admission number at other times under this criterion. (See note 1).

- B. Families who have exceptional medical or social needs as the grounds for their child's admission to a particular school (see note 2)**

- C. For junior school applications to transfer to year 3; children who are attending the infant school with close links with the junior school by the deadline for applications

| Junior school | Linked infant school |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Emmbrook Junior School | Emmbrook Infant School |
| Gorse Ride Junior School | Gorse Ride Infant School |
| Robert Piggott CE Junior School | Robert Piggott CE Infant School |
| St Pauls CE Junior School | Walter Infant School |
| Shinfield St Mary's CE Aided Junior School* | Shinfield Infant School |
| Willow Bank Junior School | Willow Bank Infant School |

*Voluntary aided junior school included for completeness - the school's governing body's admissions policy will apply.

- D. Children whose permanent home address is **inside** the schools' designated area and who has a sibling at the school at the time of application; who is expected to be attending the school when the child will enter the school. **(See notes 3 and 4)**
- E. Children whose permanent home address is inside the schools' designated area.
- F. Children whose permanent home address is **outside** the schools' designated area and who has a sibling at the school at the time of application; who is expected to be attending the school when the child will enter the school. **(See notes 3 and 4)**
- G. Other children

Note 1

Looked after children are those who are in the care of a Local Authority or are being provided with accommodation by a local authority in England in the exercise of their social services functions.

Previously looked after children are those who immediately after being in care (as defined above) became subject to an adoption order, child arrangements order or special guardianship order. They are also those who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

Applications for looked after children must be completed by the designated social worker.

If you are making an application for a previously looked after child, who immediately after being in care became subject to an adoption order, child arrangements order or special guardianship order, you will need to attach to your application one of the following pieces of evidence:

- **Special guardianship order** – This order appoints one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s). Refer to **Section 14A of the Children Act 1989**.
- **Child arrangements order** – This order settles the arrangements of the person the child is to live with. Refer to **Section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014**. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.
- **Adoption order** – Refer to **Section 46 of the Adoption and Children act 2002 or Section 12 of the 1976 Adoption Act**.

If you are making an application for a previously looked after child who was in state care outside of England and ceased to be so as a result of being adopted, you will need to include with your application, evidence of the following:

- that your child has been adopted and;
- that your child was previously in state care outside of England (in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society) immediately before being adopted.

Evidence must be sent to the Admissions Team by the deadline for evidence. Send the whole document, as priority cannot be given without it. The applicant should note, that by applying under Criterion A they understand that Wokingham Borough council School Admissions Team may obtain additional confirmation of the child's 'Looked After'/'Previously Looked After' status, either via the Local Authority where the child was taken into care, or the residential authorities' duty/triage/social care department

Note 2

When submitting an application under criterion B (exceptional medical or social needs as grounds for a child's admittance to a particular school), this must be supported by written evidence from an independent professional aware of the case relating to the child, parent/carer or other children living at the same address (e.g., doctor, hospital consultant or psychologist for medical grounds or registered social or care worker, housing officer, the police or probation officer for social needs). This evidence must be specific to the school in question; it must show why that school is the most suitable; what facilities will benefit the child, and why no other school can offer the same support.

Your application cannot be considered ***under Oversubscription Criterion B*** if you do not declare that you are applying under this criterion, and you do not provide written independent professional evidence. All supporting documentation must be received by 15 January 2023 for consideration prior to the main allocation of places. An admissions panel will consider the supporting evidence provided and will advise the applicant of its decision; the panel's decision is final. Any evidence received by the school admissions team after 15 January 2023 will not be considered in the main allocation of places but will if agreed by panel; affect the applicant's position on a school's waiting list after offer day.

It should be noted that all schools have the resources to work with special educational needs and common childhood complaints such as asthma or allergies.

Note 3

Your child will have higher priority if they have an older brother or sister at the school you are applying for. The older child must still be at the school when the younger child starts.

'Sibling' refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, stepbrother or sister, foster brother or sister or the child of the parent/carer's partner where the child for whom the place is sought, is living in the same family unit at the same address as the sibling. A sibling relation does not apply when the child currently on roll will leave the school before the sibling starts.

It includes children who at the time of application have a sibling for whom the offer of a place at the preferred school has been accepted, even if the sibling is not yet attending.

In the case of linked infant and junior schools, the application will be treated as meeting criteria D or F if the child's sibling is expected to be at either of the two schools at the time the child would enter the school. At the initial allocation, when a parent is applying for a reception place at an infant school that has both a feeder and a sibling link to a junior school and that child has a sibling currently attending Year 2 of the infant school but who will have left by the time the younger child starts, the reception applicant will be considered under the sibling criterion as part of the initial allocation. This is because, due to the feeder link, they will be expected to still have a sibling at the linked junior school at the time of admission and the parent would have made an application expressing their preference to do so.

Note 4

Occasionally a parent with more than one child can express a preference for their designated area school(s) for the older child, but the local authority is unable to meet this preference. The local authority will then allocate a place at a lower ranked preferred school or the closest available school with places. In this case, the parent may then prefer to send younger sibling(s) to the same school as the older child attends. In such instances, the allocated school may be regarded as if it were the designated area school for subsequent siblings and would be treated as meeting criterion C (sibling resident inside the designated area). **This does not**

apply however if there is a change of preference after an offer of a school place has been made.

Parents must notify the school admissions team at the time of application that they consider this exception applies. Where there is an application for the actual designated area school(s), designated area status would still be applied.

The authority has sought to make the above criteria as objective as possible. However, for category B and any other cases where judgement is needed as to which criteria the application meets, a panel of at least two officers will consider the application and supporting evidence. The panel's decision and reasons will be recorded, for the purposes of informing the parent and any subsequent appeal.

Tie Breaker

If there are more applicants within each criterion, radial (straight line) distance from home to school will be used as a tie-breaker and will be measured using the local authority's computerised geographical information system. The Council has a standard method of measuring home to school distance in a straight line using the LLPG (Land and Property Gazetteer) eastings and northings to measure the distance between the address point of the child's home address and the agreed point at the school.

For applicants who live the same distance from the school, random selection by the drawing of lots is used as a final tie-breaker.

If a parent applies for entry into a year group for more than one child, (except for twins and children from multiple births who are an exception to Infant Class Size regulation) and there is more than one child that is measured at the same radial distance to the school, with only one place available, a random selection by the drawing of lots is used as a final tie-breaker to decide which child should have the place. The remaining applicants will be added to the wait list in accordance with the published oversubscription criterion.

Measuring home to school distance: We use the Capita ONE system to calculate the distance from your child's home (the start point) to the school (the end point). This system calculates the distance in miles to three decimal places.

Please note that you cannot compare distances produced on the local authority's Capita ONE system to those calculated using any personal or online geographical information system software you may have access to such as satellite navigations system or Google maps.

Twins and Multiple Births

Where the parent has made the same preferences of school and, through the normal operation of the admission arrangements, the last available place has been allocated to one twin or child from a multiple birth, the other twin or children from the multiple birth will be

offered a place at the school. In such circumstances, both the PAN and the infant class size limit would be exceeded. The other sibling(s) would remain as exceptions to the Infant Class Size Legislation for the time they are in an infant class or until the number in the year group falls back to the PAN.

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA (CATEGORIES FOR ADMISSION) FOR COMMUNITY SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Children with statements of special educational needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan that name a school in the statement or plan are required to be admitted to the school that is named. The admissions authority does not have the right to refuse admission.

Preference should be made to own admission school admission policies to understand the basis on which an application would be considered.

The following oversubscription criteria in order of priority will be applied when a **community** or **voluntary controlled** school receives more preferences than places available. All preferences will be treated on an equal basis.

A *Looked after and previously looked after children are considered to be;*

- Children who are in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by a local authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989, e.g., fostered or living in a children's home, at the time an application for a school is made; and
- Children who have previously been in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by a local authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 and who have left that care through adoption, a child arrangements order (in accordance with Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 and as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014) or special guardianship order (in accordance with Section 14A of the Children Act 1989).
- Children who appear (to the local authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A child will be regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society. The parent/carer will need to provide evidence to demonstrate that the child was in state care outside of England and left that care as a result of being adopted

Places will be allocated under this criterion when places are first offered at a school and the local authority may also ask schools to admit over their published admission number at other times under this criterion. (See note 1).

B Families who have exceptional medical or social needs as the grounds for their admission to a particular school **(see note 2)**

- C** Children whose permanent home address is **inside** the schools' designated area and who has a sibling at the school; who is expected to be attending the school when the child will enter the school **(see notes 3 and 4)**
- D** Children whose permanent home address is inside the schools' designated area
- E** Children whose permanent home address is **outside** the schools' designated area and who has a sibling at the school; who is expected to be attending the school when the child will enter the school **(see notes 3 and 4)**
- F** Other children

Note 1

Looked after children are those who are in the care of a Local Authority or are being provided with accommodation by a local authority in England in the exercise of their social services functions.

Previously looked after children are those who immediately after being in care (as defined above) became subject to an adoption order, child arrangements order or special guardianship order. They are also those who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

Applications for looked after children must be completed by the designated social worker.

If you are making an application for a previously looked after child, who immediately after being in care became subject to an adoption order, child arrangements order or special guardianship order, you will need to attach to your application one of the following pieces of evidence:

- **Special guardianship order** – This order appoints one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s). Refer to **Section 14A of the Children Act 1989**.
- **Child arrangements order** – This order settles the arrangements of the person the child is to live with. Refer to **Section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014**. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.
- **Adoption order** – Refer to **Section 46 of the Adoption and Children act 2002 or Section 12 of the 1976 Adoption Act**.

If you are making an application for a previously looked after child who was in state care outside of England and ceased to be so as a result of being adopted, you will need to include with your application, evidence of the following:

- that your child has been adopted and;
- that your child was previously in state care outside of England (in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society) immediately before being adopted.

Evidence must be sent to the Admissions Team by the deadline for evidence. Send the whole document, as priority cannot be given without it. The applicant should note, that by applying under Criterion A they understand that Wokingham Borough council School Admissions Team may obtain additional confirmation of the child's 'Looked After'/'Previously Looked After' status, either via the Local Authority where the child was taken into care, or the residential authorities' duty/triage/social care department

Note 2

When submitting applications under criterion B (exceptional medical or social needs as grounds for a child's admittance to a particular school), this must be supported by written evidence from an independent professional aware of the case relating to the child, parent/carer or other children living at the same address (e.g. doctor, hospital consultant or psychologist for medical grounds or registered social or care worker, housing officer, the police or probation officer for social needs). This evidence must be specific to the school in question; it must show why that school is the most suitable; what facilities will benefit the child, and why no other school can offer the same support.

Your application cannot be considered ***under Oversubscription Criterion B*** if you do not declare that you are applying under this criterion, and you do not provide written independent professional evidence. All supporting documentation must be received by 31 December 2022 for consideration prior to the main allocation of places. An admissions panel will consider the supporting evidence provided and will advise the applicant of its decision; the panel's decision is final. Any evidence received by the school admissions team after 31 December 2022 will not be considered in the main allocation of places but may if agreed by panel; affect the applicant's position on a school's waiting list after offer day.

It should be noted that all schools have the resources to work with special educational needs and common childhood complaints such as asthma or allergies.

Note 3

Your child will have higher priority if they have an older brother or sister at the school you are applying for. The older child must still be at the school when the younger child starts.

'Sibling' refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, stepbrother or sister, foster brother or sister or the child of the parent/carer's partner where the child for whom the place is sought, is living in the same family unit at the same address as the sibling. A sibling relation does not apply when the child currently on roll will leave the school before the sibling starts.

It includes children who at the time of application have a sibling for whom the offer of a place at the preferred school has been accepted, even if the sibling is not yet attending.

Note 4

Occasionally a parent with more than one child can express a preference for their designated area school(s) for the older child, but the local authority is unable to meet this preference. The local authority will then allocate a place at a lower ranked preferred school or the closest available school with places. In this case, the parent may then prefer to send younger sibling(s) to the same school as the older child attends. In such instances, the allocated school may be regarded as if it were the designated area school for subsequent siblings and would be treated as meeting criterion C (sibling resident inside the designated area). **This does not apply however if there is a change of preference after an offer of a school place has been made.**

Parents must notify the school admissions team at the time of application that they consider this exception applies. Where there is an application for the actual designated area school(s), designated area status would still be applied.

The authority has sought to make the above criteria as objective as possible. However, for category B and any other cases where judgement is needed as to which criteria the application meets, a panel of at least two officers will consider the application and supporting evidence. The panel's decision and reasons will be recorded, for the purposes of informing the parent and any subsequent appeal.

TIE BREAKER

If there are more applicants within each criterion, radial (straight line) distance from home to school will be used as a tie-breaker and will be measured using the local authority's computerised geographical information system. The Council has a standard method of measuring home to school distance in a straight line using the LLPG (Land and Property Gazetteer) eastings and northings to measure the distance between the address point of the child's home address and the agreed point at the school.

For applicants who live the same distance from the school, random selection by the drawing of lots is used as a final tie-breaker.

If a parent applies for entry into a year group for more than one child, (except for twins and children from multiple births who are an exception to Infant Class Size regulation) and there is more than one child that is measured at the same radial distance to the school, with only one place available, a random selection by the drawing of lots is used as a final tie-breaker to decide which child should have the place. The remaining applicants will be added to the wait list in accordance with the published oversubscription criterion.

Measuring home to school distance: We use the Capita ONE system to calculate the distance from your child's home (the start point) to the school (the end point). This system calculates the distance in miles to three decimal places.

Please note that you cannot compare distances produced on the local authority's Capita ONE system to those calculated using any personal or online geographical information system software you may have access to such as satellite navigations system or Google maps.

Twins and Multiple Births

Where the parent has made the same preferences of school and, through the normal operation of the admission arrangements, the last available place has been allocated to one twin or child from a multiple birth, the other twin or children from the multiple birth will be offered a place at the school. In such circumstances, both the PAN and the infant class size limit would be exceeded. The other sibling(s) would remain as exceptions to the Infant Class Size Legislation for the time they are in an infant class or until the number in the year group falls back to the PAN.

Residency Requirements

HOME ADDRESS

Applications are processed on the basis of the child's single permanent home address living with parent(s) or a carer/legal guardian at the closing date for applications. An address will not be accepted where the child was resident other than with a parent or carer unless this was part of a private fostering or formal care arrangement.

Checks will be made to determine whether an address declared on the application form is that of a second home with the main home being elsewhere. If there are two or more homes, evidence will be required as to which is the main home showing that the other property is either let out on a long term rental (6 months plus), that the property is uninhabitable, or that the address is in the process of being sold and the family live permanently in the declared property. This evidence is required to prove where an applicant was living at the time of making the application.

Reference to council tax records will be made to determine a single address for consideration of a place under criteria C or D. It is for the applicant to satisfy the local authority that they live at the address stated.

After allocation, if an applicant moves from the property they have used in their application to another property which is within or nearer to the designated area of the preferred school; the address of the property they originally owned and declared on application will be the address used for determining their designated area, unless this house has been sold or rented out for 12 months prior to the closing date for applications.

Applicants will be asked to declare that the address used is expected to be their place of residence beyond the date of the pupil starting school. Applicants are required to advise of any change of circumstance at any time prior to the child starting school. If you do not declare such arrangements, or a different address is used on the application where the child does not usually live; it will be considered that a false declaration has been made and it may be decided to decline to offer a place at a particular school, or to withdraw the offer of a place. In deciding whether a place was allocated on the basis of a misleading or fraudulent application, an admissions panel will consider any supporting evidence giving reasons why the move was necessary prior to the child starting school.

It is important to declare if there is to be a change of address prior to the child starting school. If the applicant already own a property which is in the process of being sold, we are able to accept the address of the new property only on submission of the appropriate evidence in support e.g. exchange of contracts letter on both the new property and, where possible, disposal of their current property. The deadline for submission of evidence to support a move is January 15, 2022. If the move takes place later or evidence is submitted later, the local authority will only be able to consider this information after the initial allocation of places has taken place and treat the new address for waiting list purposes.

A temporary address cannot be used to obtain a school place. Temporary addresses will only be considered where evidence is provided of a genuine reason for the move e.g. flooding or subsidence.

The local authority reserves its right to carry out further investigation and require additional evidence and to reject applications or withdraw offers of places, if it believes it has the grounds to do so. In such cases, the applicant will have recourse to putting their application through the independent appeals process.

TEMPORARY ADDRESSES

A temporary address cannot **ordinarily** be used to obtain a school place. Temporary addresses will only be considered where evidence is provided of a genuine reason for the move. **Without being exhaustive**, special circumstances that might lead to a temporary address being considered might include:

- A family's principal home is unoccupiable because of fire or flood
- A family does not have access to a permanent or principal home in the borough. This may be because;
 - The family are refugees;
 - They are looked after children;
 - Families have faced eviction

Temporary address will be used until a permanent address is confirmed at which point an application/allocation would be revisited

The local authority reserves its right to carry out further investigation and require additional evidence and to reject applications or withdraw offers of places, if it believes it has the grounds to do so. In such cases, the applicant will have recourse to putting their application through the independent appeals process.

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Address evidence

If moving to or within the Wokingham Borough, evidence **that the family are living in** the new address will be required. Please refer to the list below for the evidence required depending on the type of move.

If moving to another Local Authority, deadline dates for submission of this evidence may vary.

If moving to or within the Wokingham Borough address evidence received after 15th January cannot be considered for the initial offer of places. It will be used to communicate the outcome of the application and for waiting list purposes after national offer day where required.

Buying a new home

- A solicitor's letter confirming exchange of contracts
- If purchasing a new build, in addition to the above, provide evidence that the family will be living there before the child's expected start date, for example, a letter from the developer confirming a build completion date. Documents evidencing the ownership or purchase of a plot of land will not be accepted.
- A copy of the applicants updated driving license, proof of registration at the local Drs/Dental surgery; Letters addressed to the applicant at this address; utility bills; banks statements (financial details redacted), etc. **Please note supplying only utility bills is not sufficient, as maintaining a house is not proof of occupation.**

Renting a property

- Signed tenancy agreement, usually for a period of 12 months or more (the period of the tenancy must extend beyond the date of the child's admission)
- A copy of the applicants updated driving license, proof of registration at the local Drs/Dental surgery; Letters addressed to the applicant at this address; utility bills; banks statements (financial details redacted), etc. **Please note supplying only utility bills is not sufficient, as maintaining a house is not proof of occupation.**

Returning to owned property

- Evidence of ownership of the property, i.e., the current financial year's council tax letter or recent utility bills (gas, water, electric)
- Date of intended move and evidence that the property is available to move into, for example, a signed tenancy agreement showing the end date of the tenancy
- A copy of the applicants updated driving license, proof of registration at the local Drs/Dental surgery; Letters addressed to the applicant at this address; utility bills; banks statements (financial details redacted), etc. **Please note supplying only utility bills is not sufficient, as maintaining a house is not proof of occupation.**

If the last place of residence falls within a 20-mile radius of the Wokingham Borough, additional evidence will be required to show an address has been fully disposed of. The evidence required will be proof contracts have exchanged or a copy of the end of tenancy arrangements. If neither of these are applicable to your circumstances, please contact the Admissions team for advice.

SPLIT LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

When a child lives with one parent for part of the week and another for the rest of the week only one address will be accepted for a school admission application. This will normally be the one where the child wakes up for the majority of school days (Monday to Friday).

Where shared care arrangements are in place and the child's time is split between two homes it may be necessary to establish the permanent home address for the child. In certain circumstances parent/carers will be asked to write to the LA stating the number of days each week the child spends with them. The LA may ask for evidence of which parent/carer was in receipt of child benefit at the point of application. If the parent/carer is not in receipt of child benefit, the LA will ask for proof of benefit award notices, such as Tax Credit Award Notices and will ask for evidence of the child's registered address with the GP at the point of application. If the child's home address cannot be verified the LA reserves the right to request further documentary evidence to support any claim of permanent home address.

The Local Authority (LA) reserves the right to request further proof, to establish the home address, as fit the individual circumstances.

Only one application must be submitted. If more than one application is received, or we are made aware of a dispute between parents, we will place all applications on hold until:

- one joint application is made, signed by all parties; or
- written agreement is provided from both parents; or
- a court order is obtained confirming which parent's application carries precedence

The information provided to determine the home address to be used will be considered by an admissions panel of at least two officers and their decision is final.

APPLICANTS FROM ABROAD

Overseas nationals entering the UK who wish to apply for a state-funded school, must check that they have a right of abode, or the conditions of their visa otherwise permit them to access a state-funded school before making their application.

It is the responsibility of parents to check that they and their children have a right of abode in the UK or their children have a right, under their visa entry conditions, to study at a state-funded school.

If a child is entitled to access a state funded school, evidence of the move to the area, with an application must be provide. **Please see our address evidence section to find out what evidence is required.**

The address used will be the address where the child is living at the time of application. Third party written evidence confirming the details and timing of any relocation will be required. Adjustments will be made to any waiting lists, if the family returns later, prior to the start of school. Further advice on the documentation required can be obtained from the School Admissions Team.

RETURNING CROWN SERVANTS AND ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL

Families of Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the Wokingham Borough or applicants relocating in the armed forces may apply for a place in advance of their move provided the application is accompanied by an official letter confirming the posting to the UK and the expected relocation date.

If you are applying for your child to start school for the first time, transfer from infant to junior school or to start secondary school in September 2023 and are relocating to the Wokingham Borough from **elsewhere in England** you must:

- complete the application form from the local authority where you live
- send a copy of the official MOD, FCO or GCHQ letter declaring your relocation date and future home address, unit postal address or quartering area address to your home authority by the relevant deadline. Your home authority will co-ordinate your application with the local authority for your future address

If you are applying for your child to start school for the first time, transfer from infant to junior school or to start secondary school in September 2023 and are relocating to the Wokingham Borough from **overseas** you can:

- apply using Wokingham's online application form (paper forms are also available on request)
- send a copy of the official MOD, FCO or GCHQ letter declaring your relocation date and future home address, unit postal address or quartering area address to the Admissions Team by the relevant deadline.

If we receive your application **within** the agreed application dates, and you provide an official letter that declares a relocation date and a Unit Postal address or Quartering area address, then, when considering the application against the oversubscription criteria, we will, where possible allocate your child a place in advance of your family arriving.

If you are applying to move your child at any other time (in-year application) you must:

- complete the in-year application form

- send a copy of the official MOD, FCO or GCHQ letter declaring your relocation date and future home address, unit postal address or quartering area address to the Admissions Team

There is no guarantee that a place will be available at a preferred school. Each application will be considered in line with the school's admissions criteria.

WAITING LISTS

Waiting lists will be maintained by the local authority for its schools where necessary, for children who were not offered a school place at a preferred school, until the end of the reception year to fill places that may become available during the school year. No account is taken of the length of time spent on a waiting list.

Positions on waiting lists may go up or down due to pupil withdrawals or new or revised applications received; therefore, waiting lists will be reviewed and revised:

- Each time a child is added to, or removed from, the waiting list.
- When a child's changed circumstances will affect their priority
- When parents respond to periodic requests to see if they wish to remain on the waiting list

Wait lists will be closed at the end of a school year, and parents will need to reapply for a place at their preferred school.

Children who are the subject of a direction by the local authority to admit or who are allocated to a school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those on a waiting list.

Parents will be able to apply online to Wokingham Borough Council for each year if they wish to be placed on the waiting list for that year. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that the school admissions team is informed in writing if they want their child's name to be removed from the waiting list or if their circumstances have changed from the original application.

When the normal round of admissions closes (August 31) for F2 Reception and transfer to year 3 in a junior school, the waiting list will aim to transfer to own admission authority schools by the October half term, unless the governing body indicates that they want the local authority to hold their lists and there is agreement to this.

Waiting list information will be available in accordance with the published timeline.

APPEALS

A parent, whose application is rejected, because the school is full in the required year group, has the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel. Information regarding appeals can be viewed at: www.wokingham.gov.uk/admissions or by contacting the council's Democratic Services team by telephoning: (0118) 974 6059.

Applications will be rejected if the admissions authority considers that admitting another child into an infant class (Key Stage 1) would result in a breach of the infant class legislation. Parents have the right of appeal against a decision to refuse a place at their preferred school on this basis. Parents should be aware that this situation could well apply in a number of primary (or infant) schools, particularly where they have an admission number of 30, 45 or 60 and are oversubscribed.

An Appeals Panel, where the admissions authority considers that to admit the child would force it to breach the infant class size, can only allow an appeal if it is satisfied that either:

- a) the child would have been offered a place if the admission arrangements had been properly implemented or if the arrangements had not been contrary to mandatory provisions in the School Admissions Code and/or
- b) the decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable admissions authority would have made in the circumstances of the case.

In the event of an unsuccessful appeal against non-admission to a school, the local authority will not consider any further admission, nor is there any automatic right to a further appeal for admission, within the same academic year (September 1 to August 31) unless there is an **exceptional** situation resulting in a significant change of circumstances relevant to the application.

Appeals are normally heard for the year group applied for, to start in that year group; if a parent wishes to appeal for the next year group (applicable after the May half-term prior to a September start), a parent will be asked to submit a new application form for that year group. The later application will supersede the previous application. Children's Services can then ensure that there are no new circumstances to take into consideration prior to the issuing of a letter refusing the school place.

CHILDREN WORKING OUT OF THE NORMAL YEAR GROUP

Children are normally allocated to their chronological year group. Requests from parents for school places outside a normal age group will be considered carefully whether for gifted and talented pupils or for those who have experienced problems, for example, having missed education due to ill health.

Each case will be considered on its own merits and circumstances and will only be agreed by a panel of officers from Wokingham Borough Council where there is consensus between the parents, schools concerned (both current and preferred) and any relevant professionals asked for their opinion by the panel, that to do so would be in the pupil's interests.

ADMISSION NUMBERS

Admission numbers for each year group will be published on the Local Authority website by 12 September 2022.

DESIGNATED AREAS

The designated area for each community and voluntary controlled school is held electronically and can be viewed through the council's website. These electronic maps have been adopted as the definitive descriptions of primary school designated areas for the purposes of admission arrangements and oversubscription criteria.

Living in the designated area does not guarantee a school place, as there may be more applications from parents living in the designated area than places available.

The Designated Area of the Farley Hill Primary School is increased to include two additional areas:

- a. Sherman Avenue, Fox Close and Archer Grove
- b. Poperinghe Way and Highfield Park

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